

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT A 02326 300454Z
ACTION ARA-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 2326

STADIS//////////

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, SHUM, EAID, HA
SUBJECT: U.S. - HAITI RELATIONS: TOUR D'HORIZON WITH PRESIDENT
DUVALIER

REF: STATE 141895

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS, I HAD A USEFUL HOUR-LONG
TOUR D'HORIZON JUNE 28 WITH PRESIDENT DUVALIER (WE HAD COVERED
SOME OF THESE TOPICS IN JUNE 15 CONVERSATION REPORTED BY MEMCON).
ON JOINT COMMISSION MEETING, HE EXPRESSED STRONG AGREEMENT
WITH OUR DEFINITION OF OBJECTIVES, PARTICULARLY THE NEED FOR
CLOSER MESHING OF DONOR PLANS WITH HAITIAN FIVE-YEAR PLAN.
AS EXAMPLE OF PROMISING NEW PROJECT, PRESIDENT MENTIONED
THAT DURING HIS LAST WEEK'S VISIT TO ARTIBONITE VALLEY, HEAD
OF ARTIBONITE AUTHORITY DESTIN HAD SAID THAT ALTHOUGH IRRIGATED
AREAS NOW TOTALED 32,000 HECTARES, ANOTHER 26,000 HECTARES
NOW NOT IRRIGABLE COULD BE FARMED IF SYSTEM OF PUMPING
STATIONS WERE INSTALLED. I SAID THIS PROJECT SHOULD BE EXPLORED
WITH AID AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES. THE PRESIDENT
ALSO AGAIN MENTIONED HIS PLAN TO USE NEW SATELLITE-LINKED TV
SYSTEM -- SCHEDULED TO BE OPERATIONAL IN EARLY 1978 -- TO
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REACH PEASANTS AND PROVIDE THEM WITH EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS,
INCLUDING PRESENTATIONS ON FAMILY PLANNING. HE EXPRESSED HOPE
THAT AID WOULD ASSIST IN TRAINING HAITIAN TECHNICIANS TO OPERATE
NEW TELEVISION SYSTEM, FOLLOWING UP AIDSAT DEMONSTRATION
EARLIER THIS YEAR. I SAID THIS REMAINED AN IMPORTANT AID
OBJECTIVE.

2. ON DROUGHT DISASTER THE PRESIDENT AGREED ON NEED TO HAVE MORE EFFECTIVE ONGOING DISASTER RELIEF INSTITUTION. HE SAID THAT ONE PLAN SUGGESTED BY MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO BAYARD IS TO INTENSIFY DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSFORMATION INDUSTRIES IN GONAIVES, THE CITY NEAREST TO THE CHRONICALLY DROUGHT-AFFLICTED NORTHWEST REGION, UTILIZING RECENT LEGISLATION OFFERING FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR DECENTRALIZATION. WITH GONAIVES OFFERING ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, RESETTLEMENT FROM HARDEST HIT AREAS IN NORTHWEST MIGHT BE FEASIBLE, ACCOMPANIED BY INTENSIFIED REFORESTATION.

3. THE PRESIDENT MADE NO COMMENT ON REFUGEES OTHER THAN TO REAFFIRM ASSURANCES THAT HAITIANS DEPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES TO HAITI WILL NOT SUFFER REPRISALS.

4. ON HUMAN RIGHTS, DUVALIER LISTENED CAREFULLY. IT WAS TO BE EXPECTED, HE SAID, THAT THOSE WHO OBJECTED TO GOOD U.S. - GOH RELATIONS WOULD SEEK TO SPREAD STORIES OF U.S. COMPLICITY IN MANEUVERS AGAINST GOVERNMENT. HAITIANS WERE CONGENITALLY DISPOSED TO OPPOSE ANY GOVERNMENT IN POWER, HE SAID; ONE SHOULD CAREFULLY STUDY HISTORY OF HAITI IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THIS DESTRUCTIVE MENTALITY. IN ANY CASE, DUVALIER SAID, HIS GOVERNMENT HAD NEVER PAID ANY ATTENTION TO SUCH STORIES AND RUMORS.

5. THE PRESIDENT LISTENED WITH INTEREST TO SUGGESTION THAT
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GOH INVITE A MISSION OF INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TO VISIT HAITI. HE SAID THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT WITHOUT ACTUALLY VISITING THE COUNTRY TO HAVE AN IDEA OF THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS. I STRONGLY EMPHASIZED THE PREVALENCE OF CONTINUED ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN HAITI AND THE IMPACT THAT SUCH REPORTING HAS ON PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL OPINION. I REMINDED HIM WE HAD OFTEN DISCUSSED THE GULF BETWEEN WHAT HAITI HAD DONE IN THIS FIELD AND HOW ITS IMAGE APPEARED TO OUTSIDE OBSERVERS. THE LAHRC IS IN POSITION TO ISSUE OBJECTIVE REPORT THAT COULD LAY TO REST EXAGGERATED OR OUTDATED ALLEGATIONS. THE PRESIDENT (SOMEWHAT TO MY SURPRISE) APPEARED RECEPTIVE AND SAID THAT HE WOULD STUDY THE SUGGESTION CAREFULLY.

6. I ALSO TOOK OCCASION OF THE MEETING TO DESCRIBE OUR APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY PROJECT, FOR WHICH AID HAS EARMARKED \$585,000 FOR A THREE-YEAR PILOT PROJECT TO START IN LATE 1977. I EXPLAINED THE RATIONALE AND HANDED HIM A DETAILED LIST OF TASK AREAS. I CALLED HIS ATTENTION TO THE FEATURE OF THE PROJECT PROVIDING FOR A SMALL TEAM OF TECHNICIANS WORKING VERY CLOSELY WITH A DESIGNATED HAITIAN ORGANIZATION. I POINTED OUT THAT THE

GOH MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER SEEKING THE ASSIGNMENT OF FIVE
PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS WITH TECHNICAL BACKGROUND TO THE
PROJECT TEAM (PROBABLY TO BE SITUATED IN ST. MARC). VOLUNTEERS
COULD ASSIST HAITIAN AND AMERICAN TECHNICIANS IN THE PILOT
TESTING AND SITE ADAPTATION. THE PRESIDENT APPEARED TO BE
INTERESTED IN THIS IDEA BUT, AS IN PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS OF
PEACE CORPS ROLE IN HAITI, HE REMAINED NON-COMMITAL.
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